

Message Text

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ACTION AF-04

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ADP-00 NSC-10 NSCE-00 L-02 PRS-01

CIAE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 RSC-01 DODE-00 PM-03 NEA-06

OMB-01 EUR-10 RSR-01 /064 W
----- 075801

R 281033 Z JUN 73

FM AMEMBASSY FORT LAMY

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6764

INFO AMEMBASSY BANGUI

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

C O N F I D E N T I A L FORT LAMY 1037

LIMDIS

E. O. 11652: N/ A

TAGS: PFOR CT CD

SUBJ: BOKASSA ABORTS TRIPOLI VISIT

REF: FORT LAMY 968

1. WE BELIEVE WE HAVE PIECED TOGETHER FROM SEVERAL SOURCES INSIDE STORY OF BOKASSA' S FAILURE TO GO THROUGH WITH OFFICIAL VISIT TO LIBYA LAST WEEK. AS REPORTED REF FORT LAMY TEL AT TIME OF HIS ARRIVAL FORT LAMY LATE AFTERNOON JUNE 18 HE EXPECTED TO BEGIN VISIT TRIPOLI JUNE 20 AND CONCLUDE CERTAIN AGREEMENTS. THIS WAS CONFIRMED TO ME DURING ARRIVAL CEREMONIES BY LIBYAN AMBASSADOR AND DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF PROTOCOL. FORMER COMPLAINED THIS WAS THIRD DATE BOKASSA HAD PICKED AFTER CANCELING TWO EARLIER VISITS.

2. WHEN BOKASSA' S PLANE REMAINED PARKED JUNE 20, 21 AND 22 IN FRONT OF VIP BUILDING AND WHEN PRESS ANNOUNCED QADHAFI WAS IN CAIRO SUSPICIONF AROSE THAT VISIT PLANS HAD GONE WRONG. BOKASSA LEFT FORT LAMY FOR BANGUI ABOUT 4 PM JUNE 22, AFTER MAKING
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WARM STATEMENT OF GRATITUDE FOR ADVICE, FRIENDSHIP AND HOSPITALITY OF TOMBALBAYE BUT WITH NO MENTION OF REASONS FOR RETURNING TO BANGUI. THIS DEPARTURE WAS BOYCOTTED BY MOST AMBASSADORS BECAUSE ONLY NOTICE OF DEPARTURE WAS TACKED ON TO END OF RADIO NEWS BROADCAST ABOUT 2 PM. " CONVOKING" CHIEFS OF MISSION TO AIRPORT AT 3:30. DIP CORPS HAS GENTLEMEN' S AGREE- MENT NOT TO RESPOND TO SUCH RADIO INVITATIONS IN EFFORT TO CONVINCE HAPHAZARD LOCAL PROTOCOL SHOP TO DEAL WITH US IN MORE ACCEPTABLE MANNER.

3. FOLLOWING DAY PAO RAZI ASKED CAR AMBASSADOR WALLOT REASON FOR CANCELLATION LIBYAN VISIT AND WAS TOLD BOKASSA WAS " TIRED" AND THAT LIBYANS IN ANY CASE ARE " NOT CAR' S CLOSE NEIGHBORS", SUDANESE AHBASSADOR, AFTER PROBING WITH LIBYAN COLLEAGUE TOLD ME REASON WAS THAT BOKASSA COULF NOT MAKE UP HIS MIND AS TO DATE OF VISIT.

4. WE LEARNED YESTERDAY FROM VERY RELIABLE SOURCE THAT PHONE CALLS WENT THICK AND FAST FOR NEXT FEW DAYS BETWEEN BOKASSA ENTOURAGE AND TRIPOLI. BOKASSA WAS TOLD, PROBABLY ON JUNE 19, RCC HAD NOT YET AGREED TO JUNE 20 DATA FOR START OF VISIT AND THAT HE SHOULD AWAIT FURTHER WORD. ON MORNING OF JUNE 22 QADHAFI (APPARENTLY AFTER HAVING RETURNED FROM CAIRO) PERSONALLY TELEPHONED BOKASSA ASKING HIM TO COME THAT DAY. BOKASSA REPORTEDLY DECLINED, CLAIMING HE WAS " TIRED". HE LEFT FOR BANGUI FIVE OR SIX HOURS LATER.

5. FROM CHADIAN JOURNALIST WHO OBTAINED DEPARTURE STATEMENT FROM BOKASSA WE LEARN THAT WHEN JOURNALIST PUT QUESTION TO BOKASSA PRESIDENT TOMBALBAYE INTERJECTED TO SAY HE FELT BOKASSA WOULD NOT WANT TO DISCUSS SUBJECT AT THAT TIME. JOURNALIST WITHDREW QUESTION.

6. DURING FOUR- DAY STAY IN OCAM VILLAGE BUNGALOW NEXT TO TOMBALBAYE' S, WE LEARN, BOKASSA CUSTOMARILY SLEPT UNTIL NOON, THEN SPENT REMAINDER OF DAY AND LONG INTO NIGHT IN TALKS WITH TOMBALBAYE, ROUTINE HE FOLLOWED FOR FOUR DAYS EARLIER THIS YEAR AFTER DEPARTURE OF OTHER CENTRAL AFRICAN HEADS OF STATE FROM FORT LAMY CENTRAL AFRICAN STATES BANK (BEAC) MEETING.

7. FROM AMBASSADOR WALLOT WE HEAR BOKASSA ON NEXT FOREIGN
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TRIP WILL VISIT ROMANIA WHERE ONE OF MAIN ACTIVITIES WILL BE CONSULTATIONS WITH WELL- KNOWN GERIATRICS SPECIALIST, DOCTOR ASLAN. WE ARE NOT SURE HOW THIS SQUARES WITH REPORT WE HAVE FROM RECENT PEOPLE- TO- PEOPLE SPORTS COMMITTEE VISITORS THAT BOKASSA HAD ACCEPTED THEIR INVITATION FOR ALASKAN HUNTING TRIP LATE SUMMER OR EARLY FALL.
MULCAHY

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